

"I AM the LIFE"

Jn 14:6, 5:21-29: I Peter 1:13-15

I. AS GOD'S SON JESUS (THE LIFE—ZOE) IMPARTS LIFE

- A. Creation—"in the beginning" (Gn 1:1)—utterly miraculous, for only life gives life
- B. New Creation (born again)—Nicodemus instructed (Jn 3)
- C. Sustaining, continuous life giving—working with the Father (Jn 5:17)

II. JESUS' OFFER/GIFT: ETERNAL/EVERLASTING LIFE—UNION WITH GOD

- A. A Holy God (*trislogian*: "Holy, Holy, Holy is the Lord God Almighty," says Isaiah 6:3 & Rev :8)
 - 1. Transcendence—otherness, separation from dross, "Holy Other"
 - 2. Purity—moral soundness, goodness
 - 3. Glory—radiance, beauty of holiness
- B. Gives/Requires, for eternal life, holiness, spiritual health, perfection—all agree: "without holiness no one shall see God" (Her 12:14)

III. COMPONENTS/SIGNS OF LIFE (both physical and spiritual)

- A. Internal Integrity
 - 1. **Homeostasis** (cf. J. Scott Turner: *Purpose and Desire*; Dennis Noble: *Dance to the Tune of Life*)
 - a. Physical: global weather; body temperature; blood pressure
 - b. Spiritual (cf. I Peter 1:13-15): maintaining equanimity, maximizing potential
 - 1. Prudence: Mentally attentive, prepared, overcoming sloth—"gird up the loins of your mind," loving God with all your mind, heeding Paul's advice to Timothy: "study . . . workman"
 - 2. Temperance—"golden mean," self-control, as in "righteous anger," avoiding gluttony
 - 2. **Organization** (cf. Paul's analogy of mutually-aiding body parts and church; c.f. *Your Amazing Body*)
 - a. Physical: cells are complex factories; muscles & tendons cooperate (thigh & IT)
 - b. Spiritual: balancing gifts, endeavors; "nothing to excess," neither fanaticism nor apathy
 - 1. Prayer & service, devotions & diversions
 - 2. Vocations: clergy & laymen, contemplative & active orders
 - 3. **Metabolism**
 - a. Physical: processing energy, transforming nutrients into proteins, sugars into fat
 - b. Spiritual: sustaining health, energy for action
 - 1. Cultivating awareness of the Holy Spirit, giver of life, Love-in-Act; praying for, cooperating with, supernatural virtues (Faith; Hope; Love)
 - 2. Maintaining consciousness of conscience—"do this, don't do that"
 - 4. **Growth** (increasing in size, value, importance)
 - a. Physical: plants (from acorn to oak), animals (from egg to hens)
 - b. Spiritual: "growth in grace"
 - 1. Following Jesus, who."increased in wisdom and stature and favor with God and man"
 - 2. Appropriating "means of grace" (sacraments & sacramentals; church services, liturgies)
 - 3. Consecrated to sanctification (instantaneous—"purifying their hearts by faith"— and progressive
- B. Interactive Affability
 - 1. **Adaptation**: responding wisely to environment
 - a. Physical: fasting & body's maintenance; fighting cancer cells; animal hair & changing seasons; buffalo grass & rain; brain's malleability; (Darwin's mistake re finches & Galapagos islands)
 - b. Spiritual
 - 1. Following Paul's example, becoming "all things to all men," adjusting to realities confronting one
 - 2. Adjusting to "the times, they are a-changing"—personal challenges, cultural changes
 - 2. **Responsiveness to Stimuli**
 - a. B.F. Skinner's (partial) truth re rats & pigeons
 - 1. Physical: doctors hammer knee; instinctively avoid extreme heat & cold
 - 2. Spiritual: sensitive to Spirit's call, warnings; considerate of others' needs & weaknesses
- C. Intrinsic Fecundity: **Reproduction**
 - 1. Physical: acorns & oaks, eggs & chicks & hens
 - 2. Spiritual: life-giving witness; generational trajectory (e.g. Jonathan Edwards).